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MEETING LOG  
DIRECTORATE FOR ENGINEERING SCIENCES

SUBJECT: Industry Activities to Address Water Heater  
Ignition of Flammable Vapors

PLACE: Boston Marriot Newton, Newton, MA

MEETING DATE: May 16, 1996

LOG ENTRY SOURCE: Donald W. Switzer *DWS*

ENTRY DATE: July 17, 1996

COMMISSION ATTENDEES:

Donald W. Switzer ES

NON-COMMISSION ATTENDEES:

See attached attendance sheet

MEETING SUMMARY

The Technical Advisory Group (TAG) on Flammable Vapor Ignition was formed by the Gas Research Institute (GRI) to provide technical oversight of the development of a test methodology to screen water heater resistance to igniting flammable vapors. The methodology will be provided to the ANSI Z21 water heater subcommittee and others for use in developing a standard test method for flammable vapor ignition resistance. The TAG consists of a number of experts representing the gas-fired water heater manufacturing industry, the natural gas utilities, GRI's Research and Development staff, and the CPSC. The methodology is being developed by Arthur D. Little, Inc., (ADL) under contract to GRI.

The purpose of this meeting was to review the draft report *Flammable Vapor Test Methodology Development for Gas-Fired Water Heaters*. In discussion, the Water Heater Industry Joint Research and Development Consortium ('the Consortium'), which consists of several water heater manufacturers, stated that in about six months they will be able to discuss specific product plans with individual utilities. The Consortium will solicit utility input on design options. A non-Consortium water heater manufacturer reported that they are continuing work to design water heaters to resist vapor ignition.

A number of utilities present expressed satisfaction with the work done to date. However, they expressed concern that they have not been provided information on the designs being considered, and are anxious that product certification work begin

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as soon as possible.

The final report will be published in July, 1996. At that time, the Technical Advisory group will disband. GRI will, however, continue to test water heaters and will support the ANSI Z21 Water Heater Flammable Vapors Working Group which will develop recommended standard requirements to be included in the ANSI water heater standard.

CPSC staff was asked if there have been reductions in the number of water heater accidents attributed to ignition of vapors since the last report. Staff responded that the data would not yet reflect recent activities, but that staff will consider re-examining the issue as part of the FY 1997 project. Staff reported that it continues to view progress as satisfactory.

**Attachment 1**

**Flammable Vapor Technical Advisory Group Meeting**

**May 16, 1996**

**Boston, Massachusetts**

**Attendance**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Richard Topping	Arthur D. Little
Larry Smith	A.O. Smith Water Products Co.
Eric Lannes	Bradford White Corp.
Don Switzer	CPSC
Ken Kazmer	Gas Research Institute
Daryl Hosler	Southern California Gas Co.
Joe Akin	ALAGASCO
Larry L. Westling	Northwest Natural Gas Company
Chris Christensen	Mountain Fuel Supply
Tony Demases	Lone Star Gas Co.
Larry L. Capps	Public Service Company of NC, Inc.
Bob Hemphill	Gas Research Institute
Joseph Boros	GSW Water Heating Co.
Frank Stanonik	Gas Appliance Manufacturers Association
David Lasseter	State Industries
Jay Katchka	Robershaw Controls Co.
Jack Langmead	Consultant
William Harrigill	Rheem
Drew Smith	State Industries, Inc.
Jack Moore	American Water Heater Group
Jake Hall	Rheem
Otto Vago	State Industries
Larry Kidd	Bradford White Corp.
Karen Benedek	Arthur D. Little
Peter Pescatore	Arthur D. Little
Tom Doerfler	Arthur D. Little
Jim Ranfone	American Gas Association, Arlington, VA

**Proprietary Information:** Not to be disclosed without prior written permission  
from the Gas Research Institute and Arthur D. Little, Inc.